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City of Salisbury to Partner with Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency in Support of Summer Youth Employment

2009 Federal Stimulus Funds to Create Local Youth Job Opportunities

Salisbury, NC_May 1, 2009 – The City of Salisbury will partner with the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency to provide summer job opportunities for local youth, ages 14-24. The partnership receives grant funding from the Centralina Workforce Development Board via Workforce Investment Act Title I – ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) Funds, an element of the 2009 Federal Stimulus Package. The program will offer civic, community, government, profit and non-profit agencies, the opportunity to offer 8-10 week, work employment opportunities to qualifying area youth. The potential for extensions through a 10-month workforce grant are available in some instances.

Project enrollment should offer job opportunities to 68 youth from Rowan County and 58 from Cabarrus. County funding allocation will offer approximately \$241,000 to Rowan and \$200,000 to Cabarrus. Beginning wages will vary from \$7.25 an hour to \$7.50 depending upon age, current workforce experience, and required job duties. In preparation for employment, first-time workers will attend a week-long training session dedicated to providing work-readiness skills. The educational program will entail training in face-to-face communications, work ethics, punctuality, assistance in job application completion, and employment attainment.

Mayor Susan Kluttz, speaking on behalf of the Salisbury City Council shares, “The City of Salisbury is proud to partner with the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency to provide employment opportunities for local youth. This program offers a strong match to the Next Steps Action Agenda created through our Salisbury-Rowan United Youth Summit held during June 2007.” The Mayor offers that through dedicated citizen feedback, eight support areas were identified; this information was subsequently shared back with the community during a second summit which took place later that year. “Our citizens identified eight affirmative areas of community intervention and prevention work to assist in creating a positive future for our local youth. One of the areas specifically identified by our citizens was that of ‘Jobs and Educational Job Opportunities’ to ready youth for future employment. The City’s partnership with the Community Action Agency definitely addresses this need by providing employment opportunities for local youth.” The Mayor offers that in addition to job opportunities for youth, citizens identified “Mentoring” as an additional avenue of needed support. “During their summer employment, youth will receive mentoring support and constructive guidance from City

employees who will serve as positive role models to these young individuals.” Kluttz explains that summer youth employment programs and potential partnerships are including within the 2009-2010 City Council goals, adopted March 3, 2009. “The City Council and all city employees remain diligent in the pursuit of positive opportunities to enrich, support, and sustain our local youth.”

Departments identified within the City for potential job placement opportunities include: Parks & Recreation, Utilities, Fire, Cemetery, Facilities Maintenance, and Human Resources. Additional clerical, computer, and lab placement opportunities may also be obtainable based upon project evaluation. Case workers will identify placement opportunities based upon individual career interests, skill sets, and availability. OSHA requirements will be strictly followed regarding age requirements pertaining to equipment and machinery operation.

Executive Director Elizabeth P. Fields and WIA Program Director Joann P. Diggs, both of the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc., will oversee funding allocation and job opportunity creation. “The Recovery Act,” signed by President Obama on February 17, 2009, allocates grant funds to preserve and create jobs. In addition, these funds are to promote the nation’s recovery and to assist those most impacted by the recession. The Centralina Workforce Development Board authorizes these activities under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998.

All eligible youth must meet standard low income guidelines and be current residents of the county for which the funds will serve. Individuals can be in-school or out-of-school, but must meet the 14-24 age requirements. WIA Program Director Joann Diggs offers, “I feel this year’s Summer Youth Employment program is a much needed opportunity for our area youth, based upon the recent economic blows, amid massive layoffs locally. Our area youth deserve an opportunity to play a vital role in promoting the nation’s economic recovery. This is an excellent occasion for these young individuals to participate in a program that will offer work experience with an array of services, including study skills training and academic enrichment activities with emphasis on career/vocational exploration. Area youth will receive summer employment activities, such as work-readiness skills-training, mentoring, and follow-up services for at least a year. I am excited about this new employment venture for Rowan and Cabarrus counties. The members of the WIA staff have designed a Summer Youth Employment initiative that will be sure to make an economic impact on our counties.” Diggs shares that the goal of the summer employment program is to create and develop a well-trained local work force with strong potential for securing future employment.

For questions regarding the WIA Summer Youth Employment Program, please contact Director Joann Diggs at 704-216-2189 or via email at jdiggs52@srcsc.com. The City of Salisbury is an equal opportunity employer with over 180 different job classifications and more than 400 full time positions. For more information regarding the City of Salisbury, its services, programs, initiatives, or career opportunities, please visit us online at www.salisburync.gov.

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